



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
House of Representatives
State House, Boston 02133-1054

FRANCIS L. MARINI
REPRESENTATIVE
MINORITY LEADER

January 24, 2002

Ms. Renata B. Hesse
Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
601 D Street NW, Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20530-0001

5TH PLYMOUTH DISTRICT
DUXBURY • HANSON • PEMBROKE
ROOM 124
TEL. (617) 722-2100
FAX (617) 722-2390
Rep.FrancisMarini@hou.state.ma.us

Dear Ms. Hesse,

There is a growing sentiment among economists that we are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel of our nation's recession. The markets are improving, and the economic forecast is generally positive. However, state revenues are down and most states will have to consider tough cuts on spending in coming budgets.

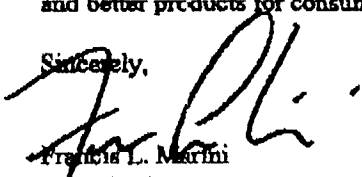
In Massachusetts, we have witnessed a shrinking state revenue base mostly caused by the recession. Many growth opportunities were squandered in the 1990s, and now, instead of trading on our accomplishments, we are lamenting over what might have been.

One thing that can be done to aid states' economies is to end the Microsoft lawsuit. We are writing in support of the nine states and the Department of Justice's settlement agreement. It is a fair and reasonable agreement, which brings a satisfactory conclusion to this long-running anti-trust case.

As the old saying goes, a rising tide floats all boats. And just as a rising tide will float a boat sitting at the lowest point first, so the resolution of this case will help those who have the farthest to rise first.

The technology-driven "innovation economy" has created tremendous opportunities for the citizens of the Commonwealth. But we must act now to take some of the uncertainty out of the economy. We urge you to endorse this settlement agreement, which would provide states greater confidence in fiscal planning and would allow entrepreneurs and businesses to get back to the business of creating new and better products for consumers.

Sincerely,


Francis L. Marini
Minority Leader


George N. Peterson, Jr.
Minority Whip


Bradley F. Jones, Jr.
Assistant Minority Leader


Mary S. Rogness
Assistant Minority Whip